

## REMARKS

Claims 1 - 7 have been rejected as being anticipated by or obvious over Rodgers US Patent 5,648,041.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2 and to make it clear that the additional gas flow (i.e that coming from gas supply 50) contacts the fiber before it enters the venturi. This is contrary to the arrangement shown in Rodgers where gas from line 47 only contacts the fiber in the venturi.

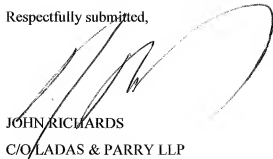
Applicant has observed apparatus constructed in accordance with the Rodgers patent in operation. The Rodgers patent is assigned to Conoco who were the original assignees of the present invention and sought to overcome problems with Rodgers. The main problem was that Rodgers produced a tangled mass of fibers. The object of the present invention is to avoid this. This has been accomplished by providing for increased control over the flow of fibers through the apparatus. One aspect of this is the supply of the additional gas stream prior to the fibers entering the venturi. This present invention has been demonstrated and has consistently produced superior fibers to that of Rodgers.

Further control is affecting flow and therefore fibers in the diffuser to slow the deposit of fibers as specified in claim 3. Claim 3 has been amended to specify the means for effecting such slowing by control of the exhaust as described at page 7 lines 6 - 15 of the specification. Rodgers does not teach this. The proportion of flows in different regions of the spinning process is important for ideal operation. Therefore this invention is not an obvious extension of the Rodgers.

Nothing in the cited art would lead a person having ordinary skill in the art to add the control features noted above which distinguishes the invention claimed from Rodgers. It is therefore submitted that the invention as claimed in Claim 1 meets the requirements of 35 USC 103

Since claim 1 is neither anticipated nor obvious, it follows that the claims dependent thereon are also neither anticipated nor obvious.

Respectfully submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JR', is written over the signature line and extends into the address block.

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